

Rev. *M^r. Heman*

2663

A SERMON.

AT an annual meeting of the NORTHERN MISSIONARY SOCIETY in the State of New-York, held at Troy, on the 8th of February, 1798, resolved, that the thanks of the Society be given to the REV. ALEXANDER PROUDFIT for his discourse delivered this evening, and that a copy of the same be requested, in order to be deposited among the records of the Society, with a view for publication at some convenient time.

JOHN B. SMITH, President.

A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED BEFORE THE
NORTHERN MISSIONARY SOCIETY
IN THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,
AT THEIR FIRST ANNUAL MEETING,
IN TROY, FEBRUARY 8;

And, by particular request, in Albany, March 6, 1798, at a special
Meeting of the Society :


By ALEXANDER PROUDFIT,

One of the Ministers of the Associate Reformed Congregation, in Salem.


ALBANY:
PRINTED BY LORING ANDREWS & CO.

1798.

S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE

NORTHERN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

IN THE STATE OF NEW-YORK

AT THEIR 12TH ANNUAL MEETING

IN TROY, TENNESSEE

And by permission, in Albany, March 6, 1835, at the
Meeting of the Society:

BY ALEXANDER PROBERT,

one of the Agents of the Society in this State.

ALBANY

PRINTED BY LEWIS & CO.

1835

A SERMON, &c.

MARK xvi, 15.

AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, GO YE INTO ALL THE
WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY
CREATURE.

THE general diffusion of the Gospel through the world is an event not more desirable in itself, than clearly foretold and explicitly promised in the Oracles of Truth. With all that majesty which so eminently characterizes the poetry of the east, with a fervour of stile expressive of the extacy of their souls, and with a confidence peculiar to inspiration, did the Jewish prophets foretell the wider extension, and increasing glories of Messiah's reign. Not confining themselves to a particular age, or to the posterity of Abraham, they embraced, in their rapturous view, all periods of time, and all the kindreds of the nations. *It is a light thing*, says the evangelic Isaiah, personating the Everlasting Father in his address to the Son as our surety, *It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.* With equal transports of gratitude, of admiration and joy, did he anticipate the period when Jehovah should be one, and his name one, throughout the world: when the light of the knowledge of his glory, long imprisoned, by the partition wall, within the limits of Palestine, should burst beyond its narrow boundaries, kindle farther and wider, and illumine, with its radiance benign, the remotest corners of the universe.

BUT, beloved in the Lord, more glorious things are reserved for us. The events which to Enoch, to Abra-

ham, to Isaiah, were only in prospect, we contemplate as amply realized and accomplished. The day of the Son of Man they beheld *afar off*. Elevated on the mount of inspiration, their eyes caught a few solitary rays, refracted over the horizon, and feebly gilding the general gloom. But lo! upon us the Sun of Righteousness has actually arisen. On yonder skies, amidst clouds of opposition, we behold him irresistibly ascending, until he blazes forth in all the grandeur of meridian glory. Jesus, the great Angel of the Covenant; Jesus, the glorious Antitype of the Levitical Economy; Jesus, the desire of all nations; foreseen by the eye, and foretold by the lip of ancient prophecy, has descended from heaven, and tabernacled in our world. In his birth, in his life, his death, his resurrection and ascension, he amply confirmed the truth of his mission, and evinced himself to be the Messiah promised to the fathers. As a proof that he was the *Mighty God* announced by Isaiah, he produced miracles the most astonishing, causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, the dead to arise: as a proof that the gates of paradise were re-opened for us, and the holiest of all made accessible by him, as the way, the truth, and the life, the veil of the Temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom: as a proof that he was the Saviour, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, the wall of partition separating between the tribes of Abraham and of Adam, is cloven to the ground, the ensign of the cross waves aloft to the nations, and the sovereign command is issued forth, *go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature*. To promote obedience to this command, is at once the object of our present meeting, and of this discourse. To all who have embarked in the missionary cause, and are duly impressed with the magnitude of the enterprise, the following queries must appear highly momentous: What are the peculiar principles of that Gospel which we are commanded to preach? What is the extent of our commission? What is our obligation to prosecute

the undertaking ? Three queries, not more pertinent to the present occasion, than obviously suggested in the text.

I. WHAT are the peculiar principles of that Gospel which we are commanded to preach ? It is unnecessary largely to advert, before this intelligent audience, to the different significations of the term *Gospel*, as employed in scripture. Sometimes it is understood in a strict, limited sense, and simply imports an assemblage of absolute, unconditional promises ; it is merely a declaration of Jehovah's love to our perishing world ; and literally, signifies *good tidings of great joy*. Sometimes it is understood in a sense more general, and comprehends the whole of revelation. The latter is obviously its meaning in the passage submitted to consideration. To preach the Gospel, therefore, is to unfold the various doctrines of revelation, according to their separate importance, and their intimate connection with each other. To discharge this duty with fidelity, it is required,

I. THAT we proclaim the apostacy of mankind, and the ruin which necessarily succeeds, in consequence of their apostacy. That all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, is equally an essential and an obvious principle of Christianity. In the light of revelation, we behold the human kind as weltering in their blood, exposed in the open field, to the loathing of their persons ; as children of wrath, alienated from the life of God ; without strength ; dead in trespasses and sins. These, and similar expressions, do not import the suspension of natural life, or the disunion of soul and body ; but they imply that state of condemnation, in which we are born : they also imply that the energies of spiritual life are totally destroyed, that communion with God, the fountain of rational felicity, is wholly interrupted : they imply not only an utter incapacity for, but an invincible opposition unto all that is morally or spiritually good. *The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* This corruption of our nature was sensibly felt, and

deeply deplored, by the more contemplative among the heathen. The passions of pride, envy, revenge, which broke forth in deeds of intrigue, rapine and murder; not to mention war, which frequently desolated nations, and drenched the earth with the blood of its inhabitants; were to them awful proofs that mankind had fallen from their primitive purity. But although the fact, that our race had degenerated, was undeniable, yet the cause, by unenlightened reason, neither was nor could be discovered.* This interesting information, it was reserved for the Gospel to afford. With the lamp of revelation we are conducted up from those deadly dreams of iniquity, to the apostacy of our first parents, as the source of our corruption and woe. *By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* The doctrine of our federal representation in the first Adam, and of our condemnation thro' his fall, however mortifying to the pride, or offensive to the wisdom of this world, constitutes an important part of the counsel of God. It has uniformly been considered as an essential principle of the Gospel, and as such has been publicly avowed and faithfully defended by all, in every age, whose profession has reflected any honour on the Christian name, or whose labours have rendered any considerable advantage to the Christian cause. Whoever thou art, child of Adam, whatever be thy external condition, however elevated in rank, or affluent in fortune, thou art by nature a child of wrath, an heir of hell. *There is none righteous, no not one. What thing soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law.* There is no exception. The charge is thundered unequivocally into the ears of each person within these walls, of the whole posterity of Adam; *that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.*†

* See Halyburton's Insufficiency of Nat. Rel. chap. 9.

† For a short, yet satisfactory, vindication of the divine procedure, in ordaining Adam our federal head, and imputing his trans-

BUT are we called to mourn as those that have no hope? are we doomed to the melancholy exercise of contemplating our ruin, without any prospect of a recovery? No. Glory to God: although we have destroyed ourselves, in Jehovah is our help. He thought upon us in our low estate. In his wisdom he contrived, in his power he executed, and in his grace revealed, a method by which he can be *just, and the justifier of the ungodly*. This is another important part of the glorious gospel. The scriptures represent all the adorable persons of the Godhead as equally concerned, and sustaining their respective capacities, in the economy of our redemption. Moved by pure unmerited mercy, the father, from eternity, made a sovereign and absolute choice of a portion of our family, whom he predestinated to glory; these he gave as an inheritance to his eternal Son, becoming their surety and representative in the covenant of grace. There appears to have been a transaction awfully solemn, between Jehovah the Father and his Son, at the concertion of this wondrous plan, in a formal surrender of the elect by the former, and their cordial reception by the latter. I know my sheep, says the Divine Redeemer, I know my sheep, and am known of mine; and I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish: my Father, that gave them me,

gression to our account, I refer the reader to "*Meditations on the Lord's Prayer*; by Lord Chief Justice Hale:" A defence so candid, and so avowed, by a person of his acknowledged integrity and literary eminence, carries with it double weight, and demands at least, serious reflection, from those who wantonly reject, as irrational, the venerable doctrines of Christianity. He was no *priest*, who ought, as they suppose, to "tremble when their citadel is assailed;" but a lay-man; and consequently no farther interested in the vindication of this doctrine, than he felt concerned for the support of truth, and the welfare of fellow mortals. He was no implicit believer, who tamely resigns the exercise of judgment, and receives his principles from parental or priestly authority; but a philosopher, a friend to free enquiry, an eminent statesman, and a civilian little inferior to any that ever adorned the bench of his country.

is greater than all. All thine are mine, and mine are thine. Do any ask what was the cause of this choice? I reply, the sovereignty of Jehovah was exclusively the cause. Sovereignty was the cause why men were chosen in preference to angels. Sovereignty was the cause why one man was chosen in preference to another. All the grace manifested to the people of God in time, as their pardon, their conversion, their adoption into the divine family, their perseverance in holiness, and final introduction to glory, is a consequence of their being chosen in eternity. These blessings are so many rivulets of salvation, flowing from electing love, as their everlasting source. Art thou, believer, highly favoured above the rest of the world? From a state of condemnation and wrath, hast thou obtained peace and reconciliation? Once a stranger and foreigner, art thou constituted a child of God, an heir of glory, and sweetly emboldened by the spirit of adoption to cry Abba, Father? Instead of that consciousness of guilt, those forebodings of destruction, which, like arrows of the Almighty, shot through and drank up thy very spirit, art thou now refreshed with the smiles of thy Father's countenance, with blessed foretastes of those joys unutterable and full of glory, which are at his right hand? Thus thou art distinguished, being chosen in Christ from all eternity. Not thine own excellence, but thy Father's good pleasure, was the moving cause. He hath saved and called thee with an holy calling, not according to thy works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given in Christ Jesus, before the world began.

I HAVE neither time nor inclination, at present, to advert to the various objections which have been occasionally urged against this scriptural doctrine. The two following, however, so frequently, and confidently proposed, we cannot pass altogether unnoticed.

The doctrine of election has been represented as militating against the freedom of human agency, as hampering the gospel-call, and rendering the sinner's acquiescence therewith, unwarrantable and presumptuous.

ous. This objection, however, does not really exist in the doctrine, but is created by the ignorant or intentional misrepresentation of its opposers. Salvation is not offered to any as *predestinated*, nor refused to any as *passed by*. Were these the terms upon which the gospel offer was made, there might be some foundation for the cavil. The sinner in the language of despair might reply, "I possess no evidences of my being eternally chosen, and therefore am unwarranted to accept of the remedy proposed;" on the contrary, Jesus, with his unsearchable riches, is tendered to each hearer of the Gospel individually: he is offered to all indiscriminately: to all, without any exceptions arising from age, rank, condition or moral character. The invitation of the Gospel is as absolute, as unhampered, as if the decree of election did not exist. Since therefore salvation is proclaimed to all without exception, the refusal of any to acquiesce, cannot arise from his non election, for this is unknown to him; but must spring from the enmity of his heart against the Gospel. His incapacity for believing proceeds not from his being passed by; but from that loss of moral principle or power which he sustained by the fall.

ANOTHER objection not less triumphantly urged is, that the belief of absolute predestination encourages our continuance in sin. It leads to the rejection, or at least neglect, of every ordinance. "The purpose of God," it is argued, "is unalterable, his will is irresistible, such as are elected must necessarily be saved independently of means, while the damnation of the rest is unavoidable." These principles, that the purpose of God is unalterable, his will irresistible, that the elect, and they only, will be saved, we readily acknowledge; but the inference, that therefore the means of grace are superfluous, we deny, as both unscriptural and fatal. It cannot consistently be maintained that this doctrine discountenances the use of means, because the decree of election is not presented unto us as the rule of our duty; but the authority of Jehovah, speaking in his word. There he commands us to give all diligence to

make our calling and election sure ; to work out our salvation, with fear and trembling. But let us appeal to facts, and ascertain whether the cautious preaching of this truth be attended with this effect. Where are the sanctuaries of public worship generally crowded ? Where do the hearers hang in trembling attention upon the lips of the speaker ? Where are their hearts apparently solemnized ? Where is every inferior thought seemingly absorbed in concern about the weightier interests of eternity ? In those places, I am bold to affirm, where this, and other peculiar doctrines of the gospel, are faithfully and judiciously taught. "I am sorry," says an eminently faithful and successful servant of the cross, "I am sorry that this doctrine of election is so rarely taught : and I am sure that it is not only the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, but that the work of the Gospel in conversion of sinners, and in the edification, growth and holiness of saints, did prosper more when such doctrine was more commonly taught, than now."*

It is absurd to assert, "That if elected we shall be saved, therefore means are superseded : there is no necessity for believing and repenting, because salvation is certain." Are we not appointed to holiness as an indispensable prerequisite to glory ? Duty and privilege, the means and the end, are connected inseparably in the counsel of God. We are indeed chosen absolutely to salvation ; but no less absolutely to sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. In conformity to that eternal transaction, by which the Son of God was ordained the mediator of the covenant, he, in the fulness of time, assuming the manhood into a personal union with his divinity, appeared in our world, and by obeying the precept and undergoing the penalty of the law, brought in an everlasting righteousness. This, my brethren, is the substance and glory of the Gospel : that Jehovah the Son, a coequal and coeternal person with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, in the Divine Essence, assumed the character of Jesus, that he was invested

* Traill's Sermon, Vol. 2, page 32.

with our nature; that he was substituted in our federal room, that he sustained, by imputation, our iniquities, and by the effusion of his blood made an actual and ample expiation for sin: these are the principles which render the Gospel a scheme worthy of God, wondrous to angels, and pacifying to the awakened conscience. To reveal Jesus in his person, his offices, his relations, and the salvation he bestows, is the whole design of Christianity. Do we search the scriptures? They testify of Christ. Do we consult the prophets? To him they all bear witness. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Do we meditate on the promises? They are all yea and amen in our Lord Jesus Christ. Do we contemplate the Levitical Law in its complicated mysterious structure, its rites, ceremonies and sacrifices? The law is a school-master, leading us to Christ. In relation to the Lord Jesus, there are two principles upon which prophets and apostles principally dwelt; and which lay claim to our principal vindication; firstly, his essential and uncreated godhead, and secondly, his substitution in the room of his people.

THE divinity of Messiah is the corner-stone upon which the fabric of redemption is founded. Without this, the Gospel must cease to afford consolation to ourselves; and, by the heathen, to whom it is our present purpose to extend it, cannot be received as a joyful sound. The sentiment may be unpopular, it may be branded as illiberal, yet, supported by the word of God, I feel emboldened to utter it, that the Prince of Darkness is as worthy of our communion, and our countenance, as the man who persists deliberately, wilfully and avowedly, to deny the deity of our Lord. Thou art the *Son of God*—thou art the *Holy one of God*, are the confessions of Beelzebub to the glory of Jesus. True it is, devils are his obstinate enemies. Implacably they resist the progress of his kingdom: yet, in our opposition to him, there is a colouring of malignity with which these apostate spirits cannot possibly be charged. They never opposed him as *their* Saviour, clothed with *their* nature, and appearing for the express purpose of

their salvation. The finite mind cannot expand to conceive the complicated blasphemies, which are necessarily involved in the denial of this doctrine. It not only charges the Father with inconsistency, who, upon bringing his first begotten into the world, says, *let all the angels of God worship him* : It not only charges the Son with presumption, *who thought it no robbery to be equal with God* ; it not only gives the Holy Ghost the lie, who has afforded the most pointed testimonies to his godhead ; it not only charges the angels with idolatry, who ascribe with a loud voice, *salvation to him who sitteth upon the throne* ; but it infuses the wormwood of perdition into the sweetest cup of Christian consolation. Expunge from the sacred page that single truth, that Jesus, our surety, is Jehovah the eternal, and you rob Christianity of the brightest jewel that adorns her crown : you rob the Christian of his comfort in life, of his triumph in death, and of his confidence at the tribunal ; our preaching becomes vain, thy faith, O believer, also is vain, yea and we are found false witnesses of God. The deity and atonement of our Lord stand and fall together. Could any, but he who is infinite in his nature, communicate infinitude of merit to his undertaking ? Could a being, who is not almighty in power, sustain the shock of almighty wrath, and by one offering of himself, expiate the guilt, not only of millions of persons, but also of millions of transgressions in the same person, which are all infinite in malignity ? Then might this hand grasp the ocean, or this arm wield the elements of nature. "The temporary sufferings of him who was eternal, could alone be a full compensation for the eternal sufferings of those who are temporary." Rejoice, O Christian, in the divinity of thy Redeemer ! This is the name by which he is called, *the Lord our righteousness*. He is distinguished with every name, perfection, honor, operation of God. He, who suffered as our substitute, is the Father's equal, his fellow, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. By him all things were made, that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be

thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him.

THE substitution of our Lord Jesus, in the room of his people, is another principle of the Gospel, equally essential and carefully to be maintained. He uniformly acted in a public capacity, as the federal head of an elected world. All that he did, or endured, bore an immediate relation to them. Each instance of suffering that he underwent, from the blood of his circumcision to the blood of his cross, is imputed to their account, and secures their redemption from wrath. Each act of obedience, which he performed, from his assumption of our nature till, at death, he exclaimed *it is finished*, is charged to them, and constitutes their title to glory. To assert that the Redeemer stood in any other capacity, that he suffered merely as a pattern of patience, as an example of heroism, or a martyr to the truth, is literally to make his cross of none effect. It is to degrade the oracles of God to a level with the alcoran of Mahommed, or the shasters of the Bramin. With equal propriety we might be directed to believe in Paul, or Peter, or Apollos, for justification, as in the Son of God; for they, during their lives, were noble advocates for the truth, and at last sealed with the blood of martyrdom the doctrines they had taught. But the reality of his substitution in our covenant room, of his vicarious sufferings, and of our acceptance through a vicarious righteousness, are taught as clearly in the scriptures as language can express them. He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification. He bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, might live unto righteousness. There was, if the expression might be allowed, an actual interchange of condition between Christ and his people. Their transgressions were accounted to him, and constituted the meritorious cause of his condemnation: the Father laid on him the iniquity of us all: he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: he suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God. On the other hand, his righteousness is imputed

unto them, and procures their justification : there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus : who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died.

For the Holy Ghost, the third person in the god-head, is reserved the application of the purchased redemption. His office in the economy of grace is not less important, nor less clearly pointed out, than those of the Father and of the Son. By his almighty energies, he raises from the death of sin, and imparts to the soul principles of life immortal and divine. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. In regeneration the sinner is altogether passive : he neither predisposes himself for, nor afterwards co-operates with the Spirit, in producing this heavenly change. The Spirit, Jehovah, is exclusively the efficient. The children of the kingdom are therefore represented as being born of God, born of the Spirit ; begotten again to a lively hope, by the washing of regeneration, even the renewing of the Holy Ghost. It would be equally unnecessary and unseasonable to notice the varied objections, which the pretended friends and avowed enemies of the cross have alternately adduced against this principle of the Gospel. Sufficient it is for all modest enquirers after truth, that thus hath Jehovah revealed, and had he not designed that this doctrine should be both believed and professed, he would not have taught it with such precision by the lips of his apostles and prophets. All the characters by which man is represented, in his natural condition, and the official titles by which the divine Spirit is designated, concur to render this truth unquestionable. Why is the former pronounced to be without strength, to be dead in trespasses and in sins, unless to shew that, as readily might the breathless corpse imbibe the energies of life, and start from the tomb, vigorous and healthful, as the sinner, independently of divine aid, put forth any spiritual exercise or act ? Why is the change effected by the first communication of gracious principles, called a new birth, a new man, a new creation, a regeneration,

unless to manifest that as we are not the cause of our natural, we neither are, nor can be, the cause of our spiritual existence? Why is the Spirit of Jehovah entitled the Spirit of faith, of love, of patience, of repentance, unless to prove that by his agency upon the heart, these graces are produced and perfected? By grace are we saved, through faith. With the rod of revelation the minister of the gospel may smite the rock of the human heart, but the power of God only can make the waters of repentance to flow forth. Like the prophet, we may descend into the valley of vision, with deep concern we may contemplate the dry bones scattered around the mouth of the grave, travailing as in birth for their re-animation, we may cry, O ye dry bones, hear ye the word of the Lord; but the energising breath of God must breathe upon them, before the shaking will take place, before bone will come to his bone, and sinew to his sinew, in the new creation.

WE might enumerate a variety of other truths, which constitute an essential part of the Gospel; as the instrumentality of faith in our justification, the importance of good works, for evidencing the reality of our conversion, the necessity of constant communion with Christ, the living head, and of constant communications from his fulness, for our advancement in holiness; these, however, with many others, we pass over, and proceed to the

II. SECOND enquiry, Which is, the extent of our commission?

THIS is written in terms the most comprehensive, the most unlimited, and is addressed to every creature.

First. It respects sinners indiscriminately, who hear the word of reconciliation: persons of every character and condition. No exception is made in the everlasting Gospel; no terms are introduced to hamper the general call, or discourage any from complying; no qualifications are specified, as repentance for former sins, reformation of conduct, or desires after holiness, as prerequisites to our acceptance of the great salvation. Jesus, with the boundless plenitude of his covenant, with his blood to atone, his righteousness to acquit, his grace

to sanctify and qualify for glory, is proposed unconditionally : whosoever will, may come and take of the water of life freely. In my master's name, and by his divine appointment, I offer to each individual within these walls a free salvation. Are you diseased ? Jesus, whom I proclaim, is an infinite physician. Are you defiled ? He is made of God sanctification. Are you spiritually naked, stript of that attire of innocence which once adorned our nature ? He has robes of righteousness and garments of salvation to bestow. Are you impotent, and unable to believe ? He is the author and finisher of our faith. Unable to repent ? He is exalted to give repentance and remission. Are you dead in trespasses and sins ? Jesus, whom I proclaim, is the resurrection and the life. The very dead he makes to hear his voice, and live. Let not the recollection of former crimes, of deliberately persevering in sin, of wilfully rejecting the invitations of the Gospel, or resisting the monitions of the Holy Ghost, discourage you from accepting the offered atonement. His love, O sinner, is boundless as his being ; his grace is an ocean without bottom, without shore. None are this moment elevated higher in the climes of bliss, none are filled with greater extacies of joy, none pour forth louder acclamations of praise to the author of their salvation, than those who were once plunged deepest in perdition. Often, often, has a sovereign Jehovah chosen the rudest stones in nature's quarry, polished them with his grace, and reared them up on his building of glory. His arm is not yet shortened, that it cannot save.

THE commission, however, is still more comprehensive, and extends to all the nations of the earth. Nothing is more obvious, from ancient prophecy and the writings of the apostles, than the final introduction of the gentiles to the privileges of the gospel. Messiah is there exhibited under characters the most general, as the favour of all men, the desire of all nations, a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Images in nature the most significant, are employed to shadow forth both the amplitude and the duration of his kingdom. It is com-

pared to a grain of mustard-seed, which although in itself almost imperceptibly small, groweth into a tree, so that the fowls of the air lodge in its branches: to a stone cut out of the mountains without hands, which should gradually extend, should at length fill the whole earth, and remain forever. Although the gospel had long been partial in its spread, Palestine being the only country enlightened with its glory, the posterity of Abraham the exclusive recipients of its blessings; yet now the gentiles shall hasten to its light, and kings to the brightness of its rising. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, the kings of Tarshis and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts, yea all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end * come.

* If by the *end* here mentioned, with Bishops Newton, Hurd, and other judicious commentators, we understand the overthrow of Jerusalem, there cannot possibly be a more luminous argument for the authority of prophecy, nor a more encouraging argument for us to persevere in our undertaking. The prediction, in all its varied parts, received an accomplishment, no less minute than if it had been a literal history of events which had already occurred. "It appears, indeed," observes the former of these writers, "from the history of the church, that before the destruction of Jerusalem, the Gospel was preached not only in the lesser Asia, and Greece and Italy, the great theatres of action then in the world; but was likewise propagated as far northward as Scythia, as far southward as Ethiopia, as far eastward as Parthia and India, as far westward as Spain and Britain. How improbable, and to all human appearance, impossible, was it that a few poor fishermen, and such inferior, illiterate persons, should propagate and establish a new religion in so short a space of time, throughout the world; doubtless it was not man's work, but God's: and from the same divine Spirit proceeded both the prophecy and the completion." *Dissert. on Proph.* vol. i. page 409, 410. Correspondently with this, Bishop Hurd eloquently remarks, "Against all appearance the success followed. In less than half a century the sound of the Gospel went into all lands, and within three centuries from the

III. OUR obligation to attempt the more general propagation of the Gospel, was our third enquiry, and now invites our attention. I might mention the explicit command of the great God our Saviour: *go ye into all the world, teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Does this command less properly belong to us, is it less inviolably binding on us, than on the apostles, whose ears heard it audibly from the lips of their present Lord? I might observe, that it receives an additional obligation from the awful solemnity of his immediate departure. No sooner had Zion's King instructed his disciples in the things that concerned the future interests of his church, and issued the royal mandate, *preach the gospel to every creature*, than lo! he is parted from them: making the cherub his car, and the cloud his pavilion, he ascends on high, and enters his glory, to return no more, until the restitution of all things! I might add, as another circumstance, heightening our obligation to activity in promoting the extension of his Gospel, the constraining influence of redeeming love. We know the grace of the Lord Jesus, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes, he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich. The degradation and the sufferings of the Son of God in the room of his people, impose on them an eternal obligation for zeal in his cause. He has thereby set us an example that we should follow his footsteps. Can we contemplate the immensity of his grace, in veiling the grandeur of the God in the meanness of the Man; the obscurity of his birth, that the arbiter of worlds was born in a manger; the poverty of his life, that the heir of all things had not where to lay his head; the mingled

death of Christ, Christianity ascended the imperial throne, and had the utmost parts of the earth for her possession." *Left. on Proph.* vol. i. page 199. Contemplating success so unexpected and astonishing, Zion may ardently exclaim, What hath the Lord wrought! she may triumphantly add, What is he not still able to effect! Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he can yet ordain strength, for the boundless diffusion of his Gospel: Jehovah hasten it in his time!

ignominy and agony of his cross ; can we contemplate these, unawed with astonishment, uninflamed with gratitude and love ? Behold what manner of love is this ! What finite mind can survey its infinite dimensions ! Who can comprehend its height, its depth, its length and its breadth !

—“ Where roll my thoughts
 “ To rest from wonders ? Other wonders rise,
 “ And strike where'er they roll ; my soul is caught :
 “ Heaven's sovereign blessings clustering from the cross
 “ Rush on her in a throng, and close her round,
 “ The pris'ner of amaze.”
 “ What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these ?”

The very earth, that felt the pangs of dissolution, and shook to her centre, the rocks that were rent, the graves that were opened, the dead who arose, the sun who veiled himself in darkness, rebuke our insensibility and ingratitude. But we shall confine our attention to the two following considerations, obligating us to disinterested zeal in this cause :

1st. A CONCERN for the glory of God. True it is, his operations, both in Creation and Providence, illustriously display his infinite perfections : the Heavens declare the glory of God, as the royal bard loftily expresses it, and the firmament sheweth his handy work : day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge : every object around us, is instamped legibly with the characters of divinity : all the varied orders of being, whether animate or inanimate, from the minutest reptile, crawling upon the earth, to that blazing orb which rolls majestic along the Heavens, proclaim the wisdom, the benignity, and grandeur of their Great Creator. These have afforded to every nation under Heaven, convincing proofs of the divine existence and perfections. Contemplating the sun, which sheds light and fertility on the earth, the moon, that with her milder radiance gilds the evening gloom, or the comet, ranging stupendous through the trackless void, the savage wanderer of the woods, no less than the lettered inhabitant of the village, have acknowledged their Author to be Divine. Yet, it is

reserved for the Gospel to exhibit the most illustrious, the most astonishing display. His word, Jehovah has magnified above all his name. On the page of inspiration his holiness, his justice, his grace and condescension, perfections which his other works revealed obscurely, are legibly and luminously inscribed. Here he is revealed as the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious : as the God of love, of peace, of patience and consolation : as a father to the fatherless, and merciful even to our unrighteousnesses, through the atonement of his son. " Here that immaculate purity which " cannot look upon sin, and that astonishing love which " cannot behold the ruin of a sinner, are awfully displayed : the majesty of the divine government is sustained, and the rigour of the law fulfilled : justice is " satisfied, mercy, without restraint and without measure, flows upon our guilty world." In the Gospel exclusively, is brought to human view, that mystery of condescension and grace, God manifested in the flesh ; the express image of Jehovah, made of no reputation. This, my brethren, may justly be pronounced the glory that excelleth. A God invested with our feeble nature ; a God sustaining, by imputation, our transgressions ; a God expiring as a sacrifice for our sins, is a subject into which Angels desired to look, which they contemplate with increasing admiration, a subject, which to Angels themselves, must remain forever unexplored. But, alas ! my brethren, are there not myriads of our race, by whom the attributes of God, as illustrated in the Gospel, are unadmired, unknown ? Nations, countless as the stars of Heaven, inhabit this Globe, who have neither heard his fame nor seen his glory. They are without God, and without Christ, in the world. They are become vain in their imaginations. They have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. With rude admiration, they gaze on the natural sun, breaking from the east, and kindling day around them ; but never have their eyes beheld the sun of righteousness, whose benign glories dissipate the more malignant gloom of spiritual darkness. Often

have their ears been shocked with the voice of God, speaking terribly in the earthquake and the thunder; but are yet unhailed by his still small voice in the word of reconciliation. They feel some sense of obligation to him in whom they live, move, and have their being: but, alas! his glory they give to others, even to Gods of their own creation.

WITH a concern for the glory of God, we may connect, as a second obligation for preaching the gospel, compassion for our fellow mortals. Sympathy for an object in distress, and a painful solicitude for its relief, are equally dignified and universal characteristics of human nature. Who, that rolls in affluence, can deliberately witness a fellow mortal perishing with hunger, and not administer a pittance to his wants? Who, possessed of the common feelings of humanity, could coolly view a fellow creature shivering in the blast of winter, without endeavoring to afford him seasonable relief? But a thousand thousand fold more pitiable is the spectacle here exhibited to our view. Not the body merely, it being perishable in its nature, its miseries, however exquisite, are but of momentary duration; it is the soul, the precious, never, never dying soul, which claims our compassion and our aid. Do not your hearts melt within you while your eye rolls over that western wilderness? There you behold millions of your fellow mortals, perishing without vision; stung deep they often are with remorse for guilt; but strangers to that Jesus whose blood speaks reconciliation and peace. Whelmed occasionally with dread apprehensions of approaching ruin; but ignorant of that Jesus who redeems from wrath, and secures from glory, Hark! from the dark thickets of yonder forest, a voice breaks upon my ear! "Come over ye servants of the Most High God, that teach the way of salvation, come over and help us." Are we not your brethren by nature, sprung from the same common Parent? Ah, beloved, are we not verily guilty concerning these our brethren, in that we have seen the anguish of their souls, and have not relieved them! Turning our faces towards the west, with apparent earnestness, we have often prayed, *be ye*

converted, be ye saved; but where are the monuments of our zeal for their conversion and salvation? Shall we remain any longer unmoved by the cry of their miseries? Can they, to whom their own salvation is their chief concern, be altogether unconcerned about the salvation of others? Is it possible that any who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, who have felt those joys unutterable and full of glory, which overflow the soul under the assurance of his love, is it possible for such to read those awful declarations, *where no vision is, the people perish: he will pour his fury upon the heathen*, and yet refuse their substance, refuse their service, for conveying to them the glad tidings of reconciliation? Let none deliberately mock the Most High, or wantonly insult their misery, by advising us "to leave the work to Holy Providence; that God will extend relief to them in his own time." Jehovah it is true worketh, but it is equally true he worketh by means. The Gospel has never yet been propagated by miracle. As far as its joyful sound has extended through the earth, it has unvaryingly been effected through the intervention of means. Must the Eunuch be savingly enlightened in the knowledge of the truth? Philip is dispatched to preach to him Jesus. Must the Samaritan woman be instructed in the doctrines of salvation? The Son of God must needs pass through her country. Is Cornelius, the Roman Centurion, to be profelyted to the Christian religion? Peter is employed as the instrument of his conversion. Are the people of Macedonia to be visited with the Gospel of peace? Paul is addressed by the vision, *come over into Macedonia and help us*.

The improvement of this doctrine is not less interesting than it is obvious.

I. WE are encouraged amidst opposition, however inveterate, to persevere in our present undertaking. The design of evangelizing the nations, is not the sudden fally of enthusiasm: it is not the delusive dream of the visionary; then it might possibly evaporate with the moment. No: it is the cause of Jehovah, and must invincibly prevail. While his sovereign com-

mand, *preach the Gospel to every creature*, authorizes us to proceed; his inviolable promise ensures both support and success: *Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.*

A THOUSAND prophecies relative to the spread of the Gospel, and the conversion of the heathen, yet await their accomplishment. In the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there they shall be called the sons of the living God; all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him. Amidst prospects so glorious, what eye does not sparkle with joy? What heart does not beat high with expectation? Let Zion rejoice, let the children of Judah be glad, for yet a little while and their king shall extend unlimited the honours of his reign. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise unto the ends of the earth; ye that go down to the sea and all that is therein, the isles and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: thou inhabitant of the rock sing, shout from the top of thy mountain, for ere long shall the light of salvation dart joyous upon thy dreary abode.

COME, beloved in the Lord, let us awake from security; let us shake off the lethargy of former years; let our exertions hereafter bear some proportion to the magnitude of our enterprize, and to our confidence of success. Does the enemy of the cross eagerly seize, and industriously circulate, whatever tends to the dishonor of the Son of God? Shall we be less active in diffusing the Gospel of his glory? To glut the avarice or gratify the ambition of their imperious masters, do not the minions of despotism brave opposition? They encounter the perils of the ocean, submit to the fatigues of the wilderness, they laugh at the glittering spear, they rush unmoved on death arrayed in tenfold horrors; and shall we, who have enlisted as good soldiers under Jesus, the great captain of salvation; we, who profess to have imbibed his Spirit, who endured the

cross and despised the shame ; we, whom he redeemed from the curse, by enduring that very curse in our room ; we, for whom at the expense of his blood, he procured an inheritance incorruptible, and crowns of glory that never fade away ; shall we betray less ardour and zeal ? Carelessly can we fold our arms in sloth, or basely shrink from opposition, when our Captain waves aloft his standard, and calls aloud to follow on ? O, my brethren, to all the boasts of modern infidelity, let us not afford the additional triumph, that the friends of Zion are cold and unconcerned about her interests.

LET none dare to discourage us by multiplying objections. I repeat the declaration, the design of evangelizing the nations is the cause of Jehovah, and must invincibly prevail. Do any ask, where is your authority, what is your warrant for interfering with the religion of the heathen unsolicited, unasked ? I reply, the commission, instamped with the signature of Zion's King, is this moment spread to our view : *Preach the Gospel to every creature.* Do any ask where are your missionaries, whom will you send, who will embark for you in an enterprize so difficult, so hazardous ? I reply, that with Jesus Jehovah is the residue of the Spirit. In him all the fullness of the god-head dwells bodily. Evangelists, pastors and apostles, sons of thunder, sons of consolation, he can easily raise up as the necessities of Zion require. Do any ask where are your resources for supporting expences, so great as a mission to the heathens must naturally incur ; your friends are few in number, most of them inaffluent in condition ? We reply, that creation is our master's, and the fulness thereof. The gold and the silver are his, the cattle on a thousand hills are at his disposal ; his servants, therefore, he can easily send forth, if he chuses, without money, without scrip, without purse, and not suffer them to lack. Sooner shall the ravens of the wilderness minister to their wants, or yonder cloud pour down manna for their supply, than the purposes of God come short of their accomplishment. Do any further ask, if missionaries were furnished, if funds equal to the ex-

penſe were collected, is there a probability, or even a poſſibility, of ſucceſs? Are not the Indians roving in their habits, invveloped in ignorance, drenched in ſuperſtition? I reply, with God nothing is impoſſible, the moſt unſettled, his grace can arreſt, the moſt benighted, it enlightens, the moſt ſtubborn, it effectually ſubdues, the rude rover of the wilderneſs, no leſs than the politer citizen of Athens or of Rome, it can turn from idols, to ſerve the living God. We rejeſt as unworthy a reply that popular objection, that the time is not come, the time that the Lord's houſe ſhould be built. Thus ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, to-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

ONLY believe, and your eyes ſhall yet ſee the ſalvation of our God. Read, ye that deſpond in the proſpect of our preſent difficulties, read the triumph of his church in former periods of the world. At the command of their covenant God, Iſrael, cruſhed by oppreſſion, diſheartened by diſappointment, ſuddenly re-vives; ſwells beyond the chains of their captivity, and march forth from Egypt joyful and victorious. Alternately were the laws of nature ſuſpended and reverſed to ſubſerve their deliverance, and their defence. Have you never read of a Gideon, of Barak, and of Sampſon, and the prophets, whom time would fail me to number? who through faith ſubdued kingdoms, wrought righteouſneſs, obtained promiſes, ſtopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, eſcaped the edge of the ſword, out of weakneſs were made ſtrong, waxed valiant of fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens? Behold again the apoſtles of the Lamb, few in number, mean in condition, unſkilled in worldly policy, unaided by worldly power, with no ſword but the ſword of the ſpirit, with no ſhield but the ſhield of faith, they go on conquering and to conquer. No ſooner is the trump of the Goſpel blown by this ſpiritual prieſthood, than lo! the walls of ſuperſtition totter on their baſe, every idol ſinks to the ground, and men of all kindreds and all characters, crowd to the ſtandard of the croſs. Abaſhed for his former unbelief, we

hear the Jew rapturously exclaim, lo, I have found the Messiah of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write ! Convicted of his folly, we behold the gentile start from his image, where he blindly kneeled ; and bow in homage to the Son of David, as his Saviour and King. Who hath heard such things, who hath seen such things ? The earth brought forth in a day, and a nation was born at once ; for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Hitherto hath the Lord of hosts performed his promises ; hath he now lost power to redeem ? Is his arm unnerved by the shock of opposition, or fatigued by repeated exertions ? Justly might he admonish our unbelief with the antient rebuke, *O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt !* Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary.

2. From a variety of appearances in Providence, are we not encouraged to hope that these prophecies are hastening to their fulfilment ? Fatigued with her former confinement, Zion begins to stretch forth her arms ; she virtually complains, “ *The place is too narrow for me, give place to me that I may dwell : bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.* ” Exertions the most unexampled, exertions the most disinterested, are making for the more general diffusion of the Gospel. Forgetting each inferior distinction, nobly crucifying that unsocial, unchristian spirit, which rallies around the standard of party, so hostile to the glory of Christ, and repugnant to the genius of his Gospel, Christians of different denominations are now concentrating their efforts towards one great design. This day we are assembled to commemorate a new æra in the annals of Christianity. A wonder indeed ! Professors of various communions, once torn by religious faction, each meditating the aggrandisement of his own party, rather than the honour of their common Redeemer ; whose pretended zeal for the Lord of hosts evaporated too much in rancorous reflections upon each other, now associate together : they sit as brethren in the same as-

sembly ; with one mouth glorify God, and with one mind deliberate on the concerns of his kingdom. The witling may deride our union, as the collusion of priests, for promoting the reign of superstition ; the snarling bigot may represent it as a conspiracy against the truth, and a fearful stride to latitudinarianism ; but confident I am, that he who hath wrought this which you both hear and see, is the Holy Ghost. While I look around this large assembly, while I recognize our unity of design, and harmony of measure, mark that solicitude which heaves in every breast, and solemnizes every countenance, my imagination involuntarily transports me to that memorable occasion, when on the day of Pentecost the disciples, with one accord, waited for the promise of the Father, in the effusion of his spirit. Thou breath of the Lord, that as a rushing wind descended upon them, blow mightily on our assembly. Each heart inflame with an apostolic enthusiasm, each tongue endow with an eloquence divine, to proclaim to the stranger and the foreigner, the wonders of Immanuel's grace ! Hail, all hail, ye, whom zeal for the Lord of Hosts, and compassion for perishing mortals, have prompted to similar exertions ! However remote in residence, or different in name, of whatever clime of the earth, or kindred of the nations you may be, our bosoms glow towards you with the affection of brethren : Our arms are extended to embrace you, as workers together with ourselves in the Gospel of one common Lord. Jehovah the Holy Ghost bless you abundantly, and cement you more and more : By the liberal effusion of his influence benign, may he preserve your union as lasting as its objects are important and glorious. Zion's watchmen are seeing eye to eye, blessed pledge of the more blissful period when the Lord shall be one, and his name one, throughout the world.

A VARIETY of other events in Providence might be mentioned, leading us to expect the speedy ingathering of the gentiles. The general shaking of the nations is held forth in Scripture as the forerunner of the coming of him who is the desire of all nations. God has fore-

warned us that he would previously pour out his fury upon the seat of the beast ; this prediction has in part been already accomplished. The vials of his wrath have lately been emptied forth, and lo ! the smoke of his torment ascendeth ! One circumstance, however, appears peculiarly hopeful for the heathen, which I tremble to mention ! the increase and effrontery of infidelity among ourselves. It is a part of the divine procedure, at once mysterious and awful, that he makes trial of individuals and nations ; he affords to them for a season the ordinances of his grace, but if these be unimproved, he transfers them to others : thus were the Jews at first rejected, and the gentiles introduced to the privileges of the Gospel : thus the churches of Asia, where the power of godliness so eminently flourished, owing to their apostacy, are now utterly forsaken : they are erected a fearful monument of divine displeasure : the candlestick of ordinances is removed, and the dew of the Holy Ghost altogether suspended. Tracing the movements of Providence, in former ages, and comparing our present condition with that of other Christian nations, when their judgment began, we are filled with the mingled emotions of terror and joy ; of terror for ourselves, and of joy for the heathen. That lamp, the glorious Gospel, which has long shone neglected in our abodes, which through the foul exhalations of the pit begins to glimmer, and threatens to expire, a righteous God may suddenly snatch from our enjoyment, and fasten in the dark places of the earth. Already, in just indignation, he has shed upon us a spirit of slumber, giving us eyes that we should not see, ears that we should not hear, and hearts that we should not understand. Rarely has infidelity assumed a more effrontful air. Many that were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and early instructed in the principles of his divine religion, have openly renounced their profession. They imagine that their talents can be consecrated to no better or nobler purpose, than the blaspheming of every thing sacred. They trample under foot the Son of God, account the blood of the covenant

with which they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of Grace. If any such are present, with all the fidelity of Jehovah's messenger, I embrace this opportunity to warn them of their danger. The experiment of avowedly rejecting the great salvation must be considered *at least as hazardous*. Have you deliberately weighed the awful import of that declaration, *If any man be ashamed of me and my Gospel, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father, and with the holy angels*. Where wilt thou stand, thou baptized infidel, "thou washed to fouler stain," where wilt thou stand when yonder heaven shall reveal thy judge, in the full blaze of uncreated glory? Can thy heart endure, when the very elements of nature shall melt before the lightnings of his indignation? Whether wilt thou flee for help, when the hills and the mountains, to which a blind despair may hurry thee, shall start aside, and leave thee a defenceless prey to his thirsting sword? Canst thou answer for one of a thousand of thy crimes, when the book of remembrance, opened by his hand, shall expose the large catalogue unwelcome to thy view? when every transgression thou hast committed, the covenant of baptism violated, the ordinances of grace neglected, the influences of the Spirit thou hast quenched, each contemptuous thought thou hast secretly cherished, or scoff openly cast at Christ or his cause, shall rise fresh to thy recollection? The apostate angel may palliate his doom, by pleading "that no redemption was procured for him;" the savage of the wilderness may lessen his condemnation, by pleading "that the Saviour was never offered to him;" but no circumstance, thou Gospel despiser, can be suggested to soften the horrors of thy damnation. That declaration from the lips of the affronted Saviour, *I called and ye refused*, must shut thee up in sullen and silent despair. Be not deceived, my beloved hearers, let none consider these as imaginary terrors that shall never be realized. O, no! as certainly as my voice now vibrates upon your ears, shall the arch angel's trumpet thunder the summons along the tomb, *awake*,

arise ye dead and come to judgment. Let none regard these representations as magnified, in order to excite unnecessary fears, or to startle the timid and the weak. O, no! Who knows the power of Jehovah's anger? as far as the drop of water is surpassed by the infinite ocean, so far will the terrors of that day rise above the efforts of description. *The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, shall hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and cry to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand.* Acquaint now yourselves with him and be at peace. This day is the great God renewing his overtures of peace. He is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; come now and let us reason together, is his gracious invitation. Come now and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

3. FROM these words are suggested the doctrines upon which, in preaching the Gospel, we ought principally to dwell. Whether at home, or among the heathen, let it be our first concern, to fasten upon the sinner's conscience, a conviction of his natural degeneracy. Let us exhibit to him, in the mirror of divine revelation, his real though fearful counterpart, his guilt, his corruption, his utter inability, by any strength of his own, to emerge from his wretchedness, and thus prostrate him submissive, at the feet of sovereign mercy. Whence arises the bold invasion, that has lately been made upon the doctrines of grace, which have constituted in all ages the bulwark of Christianity; the general opposition to our election by the Father's love, our justification by a vicarious righteousness imputed, our instatement in the covenant, and progressive sanctification, by the operations of the Holy Ghost? It proceeds principally, if not entirely, from ignorance of our original depravity. He who acknowledges the apostacy of mankind, who acknowledges that by the demerit of this

apostacy, we have forfeited every claim upon the divine favour, must also acknowledge that if all are recovered, this recovery must be purely of grace ; if a part only are restored, undeserved mercy is manifested to them, but not the least injustice done to the rest. To the conscience awakened with a sense of guilt, and trembling under apprehensions of divine wrath, it becomes us to proclaim a crucified Jesus, as the only remedy. There is no salvation in any other : There is no redemption from the curse, but through the application of his blood : There is no title to the heavenly inheritance, but by the imputation of his righteousness. Some who make pretensions to superior attainments in divine things, have suggested the propriety of carefully concealing, in our addresses to the heathen, the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, and of adopting in their room, a system of rational religion. They suppose that by this accommodating principle, we should arrest their attention, prepossess their affections, and probably succeed in their conversion. This method, should it eventually prove successful, would literally be making their faith, to rest not on the power of God, but in the wisdom of men. It would, as a writer justly observes, be "heathenizing ourselves, instead of Christianizing the heathen." But however plausible these insinuations appear in *theory*, in *fact* they are notoriously false. The artless, unaffected doctrines of the cross, have ever triumphed in the conversion of sinners : they constitute that artillery of heaven, before which the ignorance of superstition and the hardness of infidelity are equally unable to stand. The great apostle of the gentiles was no unsuccessful preacher of righteousness ; yet, did he aim at modelling his discourses to meet the different dispositions of his hearers ? Did he aim at gratifying the curiosity of the inquisitive, at flattering the pride of the speculative, or meeting the ruder apprehensions of the vulgar ? No : Whether his audience was the sensual inhabitants of Crete, or the more polished citizens of Athens, or of Rome, his theme was unvaried : He determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him

crucified. With the same doctrine the Moravians in the north, the Danes in the east, a Brainard,* a Mayhew, an Edwards, and an Elliot, in our own country, have brought in the first fruits of the pagan world, as a pledge of the ingathering of the whole.

* No apology I trust is requisite for inserting a few remarks from the life of Mr. Brainard, written by the great Jonathan Edwards, pages 330, 331. And here it is worthy to be considered, not only the effect of Calvinistic principles, as they are called, upon Mr. Brainard himself, but also the same effect of such doctrines as taught and inculcated by him, on others. It is abundantly pretended of late years, that these doctrines tend to undermine the very foundations of all religion and morality, and to enervate and vacate all reasonable motives to the exercise and practice of them, and lay invincible stumbling blocks before infidels, to hinder their embracing Christianity; and that the contrary doctrines are the fruitful principles of virtue and goodness, set religion on its right basis, represent it in an amiable light, give its motives their full force, and recommend it to the reason and common sense of mankind; but where can they find an instance of so great and signal an effect of their doctrines, in bringing infidels who were at such a distance from all that is civil, humane, sober, rational and Christian, and so full of moderate prejudices against these things, to such a degree of humanity, civility, exercise of reason, self-denial and Christian virtue? Arminians place religion in morality; let them bring an instance of their doctrine, producing such a transformation of a people, in point of morality." To these we may add a few observations of Mr. Brainard himself. "Those doctrines, which had the most direct tendency to humble the fallen creature, to shew him the misery of his natural state, to bring him down to the foot of sovereign mercy, and to exalt the Great Redeemer, discover his transcendent Excellency and infinite preciousness; and so to recommend him to the sinner's acceptance, were the subject matter of what was delivered in public and private to them, and from time to time repeated and inculcated upon them:" Gen. Rem. page 66. A single observation like this, founded on actual experiment, is more convincing than volumes of speculation. By their respective fruits, we must judge of principles, as well as of persons. Facts in divinity, no less than in philosophy, are obstinate arguments. These doctrines therefore which have overcome all possible opposition, which triumphed, in the first promulgation of the Gospel, over the influence of combined wealth, policy and power, which have since succeeded in purifying the most profligate, in civilizing the most savage, which have prostrated the pride of philosophy at the foot of the cross, and changed even the lion into a lamb, prove themselves fully to be both the wisdom of God, and the power of God.

AGAIN, while we recommend the sinner to the Lord Jesus for reconciliation and acceptance, let us unequivocally point out the necessity of the Spirit for sanctification. With equal propriety might Christ and his righteousness be overlooked, as the Holy Ghost and his operations. Perhaps a concealment of this scriptural truth may be considered as a principal reason why the preaching of the Gospel is so mournfully unsuccessful among ourselves. By not duly realizing our utter inability to produce a saving change upon our hearers, or teaching them the humiliating lesson, that they are without strength, that they cannot act faith, repentance, or any other grace, independently of divine aid, we have provoked the gracious Spirit to depart; and what is the consequence? Ordinances have lost their usual efficacy; they are not, as formerly, the power of God for the conviction and conversion of sinners. To our mournful *experience*, we have now been taught, what we refused to learn from his word, *that without him we can do nothing.*

PERMIT me to intrude further upon your patience, by inviting the attention of two classes of my audience.

SUCH of us, brethren and fathers, as are invested with the sacred office of the ministry, these words call loudly to rouse from our spiritual sloth, to give diligence to make our own calling and election sure. Pretensions of zeal for spreading the Gospel must be mere mockery of the Most High, if we, ourselves, have not previously honoured him by believing on his Son; besides, of all men, the ungodly minister is, beyond conception, the most miserable. Each terror of the law, which he denounces against others, fastens the seal to his own condemnation. While, with his hand, he points his hearers the path to immortality, his own feet are gliding imperceptibly along the plain to endless destruction. He is employed in recommending a Saviour, in whom he has no interest; in painting the joys of heaven, which, without a change, he shall never participate; in describing the horrors of a hell, to which he is hastening. The weight of our present work, requires us

also to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Our situation is awfully critical, no less than important; do we look at home, infidelity rages; like a mighty torrent, swelling as it advances, it has broken in upon our borders, and thousands on every hand are hurried and overwhelmed in its deadly stream: rising again, as they roll, they now float upon the surface, and are polluting, with the contagion of hell, the whole atmosphere of the Church. Do we look abroad, a field immense and uncultivated opens to our view. The Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, is spreading wide her boundaries; but, alas! who is sufficient to explore and improve her uncultivated parts? These things are mentioned, not to discourage from our present purposes: God forbid! but they are designed to shake us from every created confidence, that we may rest upon Jehovah, as our support. To him, no difficulty is unconquerable, no obstacle insurmountable. Relying on his strength, the feeble become as David; worm Jacob threshes the mountains, and beats them small as dust. Opposition, in the discharge of our duty, we must calculate upon meeting: our greatest temptation, however, does not arise from the open adversary; the enemy in the camp, the traitor in disguise, is our most dangerous foe. The reproach of being "righteous overmuch," of being "frantic, wild, or enthusiastic," secretly insinuated by a brother, or a friend, has often served to shake from his firmness the *man* who could have met unmoved the majesty of tribunals, and the terror of flames. But let not these things trouble us, neither let us hold our reputation, or even our lives, dear, that we may finish our course with joy. Brethren, remember, we must be comparatively hated, houses and lands must be forsaken, when the honours of our master and the salvation of souls are at stake. What avail all the pain, the poverty, or reproach, that can accompany the cross, when the unutterable glories of the crown swell upon our view? Need we startle at the apprehension of being disowned by an acquaintance, however respected, or a brother, a sister, or parent, however dear? believ-

ing that they who turn many to righteousness, shall shine as stars and as suns forever and ever. The conversion of a single savage, will reward us a thousand fold. Transporting thought ! As this event now transports, will thrill the spirits of just men perfected : there will be joy before the Angels of God : Jesus, our beloved, will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied : the Holy Ghost will have another monument to the glory of his grace.

AGAIN, let such as are not immediately connected with any pastoral charge, examine whether Providence be not calling them to embark as missionaries to the heathen. The present is a singularly favourable opportunity for such, of bringing glory to the Redeemer, of rendering inconceivable services to their fellow-creatures, and embalming eternally their own names among the living in Jerusalem. "Honourable among men, honourable in the eyes of angels, and of God himself, will our first missionaries be." Might I, without the suspicion of ostentation, be indulged in expressing my own feelings, I would declare, that, next to that grace of the Lord Jesus that accounted me faithful for the ministry, I adore his goodness in giving me a seat in this Missionary Society ; and a greater glory than either would I account it, were his Providence pointing me out as a suitable missionary preacher to the heathen. If a bare cup of cold water given to a disciple of Jesus, shall not be forgotten ; if the honest confession of his name will be honourably acknowledged in presence of his Father and the angels ; how accumulated must be the reward, how unutterable the glory of those who leave all and follow him ; who exchange the lap of ease, and affluence and honour, for the fatigues, the poverty, and perils of the wilderness ! Near to the Mediator on his throne will such be invited to sit down ; palms of immortal victory will be put into their hands, and crowns of pre-eminent lustre set upon their heads. Behold the ark of the covenant rests, even the everlasting Gospel ; is there no tribe of Levi to light it up and bear it along ? Ocean divides his waters that you may

safely pass over ! Will you tempt the Lord by waiting for farther signs ? Lo, the pillar of cloud and of fire, the pavilion of the redeeming angel, descends ; it hovers over yonder waste, will you not venture forward under its divine protection ? Already the voice re-echoes through the wilderness, *prepare ye the way of the Lord*. The mountains sink, the valleys rise, crooked places are made straight, and rough places plain. Go through ! go through ! ye ministers of our God, and may the breaker go up before you, even Jehovah our king, upon your head.

Now, " BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, WHO ONLY DOTH WONDROUS THINGS ; AND BLESSED BE HIS GLORIOUS NAME FOREVER ! AND LET THE WHOLE EARTH BE FILLED WITH HIS GLORY ! AMEN, AND AMEN !"

FINIS.

ERRATA.

- Page 6, line 5, for *refracted*, read *refracted*.
 8, l. 12, erase the word *from*, and for *dreams*, read *streams*.
 23, l. 32, for *from*, read *for*.
 36, l. 7, for *roll*, read *rot*.
 36, l. 32, erase the word *we*.
 37, l. 4, for *now* read *new*.

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